

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 73
By Mumpower

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of award-winning journalist
Stephen W. Phelps.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of
the passing of Stephen W. Phelps, of the *Bristol Herald Courier*, and

WHEREAS, Steve Phelps was an accomplished reporter, columnist and editorial writer;
winning many awards in at least four states - Colorado, Texas, Virginia and Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Stephen was an exemplary person and consummate professional who
never said an unkind word to others; showed frustration only at machines; displayed contempt
for no one; and was friendly to all, conversing easily with those who came his way; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Phelps served with acumen and alacrity as a writer who showed
compassion for his fellow man and a deep concern about his community earning the respect of
his peers and superiors alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, he was a graduate of Indiana University, where he received his bachelor's
degree in English and Mathematics and a master's degree in Linguistics from the University of
Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, from 1983-1986 Stephen worked as a copy editor for the *Colorado Springs
Sun* and held various positions with the *Victoria Advocate*, *Lewisville Daily Leader* and the *Ennis
Press*, all in Texas; and

WHEREAS, at the time of his death, he was the Opinion Page Editor for the *Bristol Herald Courier* newspaper, a position he had held since 1998 after previously serving as copy desk chief for six years; and

WHEREAS, prior to his relocation to Bristol, he had worked for the *Knoxville Journal* for five years where he had served as city editor, assistant city editor and copy editor; and

WHEREAS, Stephen won numerous design and editing awards as part of the copy desk teams in Knoxville and Colorado Springs, as well as first place awards in feature writing, columns and editorials from the Texas Press Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Phelps had been honored by both the Tennessee and Virginia Press Associations for column writing and editorials; and

WHEREAS, Stephen shared his love of composition and expression by teaching an advanced reporting class at Emory & Henry College and had been an adjunct instructor of English at East Tennessee State University's Bristol and Johnson City campuses; and

WHEREAS, he was also an accomplished musician and played numerous instruments, including the acoustic and slide guitar, mandolin and the bouzouki as well as singing lead and accompaniment with his sister-in-law, Mary Tom Perkins, as a performing duo, "The Larkins"; and

WHEREAS, Stephen Phelps was a devoted husband and enjoyed the loving companionship of his beloved wife Martha Perkins; and

WHEREAS, Stephen leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional journalist and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Stephen W. Phelps, reflecting fondly upon his

impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Stephen Phelps.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.